

English port. Las Cases affirms that Napoleon was recommended to proceed to England by Captain Maitland, who assured him that he would experience no ill-treatment there.¹

¹ Napoleon's presence at Rochefort excited such enthusiasm among the people, the sailors, and soldiers, that the shore uninterruptedly resounded with shouts of "Long live the Emperor!" and these shouts, repeated from mouth to mouth, could not but teach those who had flattered themselves with having mastered the will of Napoleon, how easy it would be for him to shake off his chains and laugh at their vain precautions. Faithful to his determination, however, he firmly resisted the impulse of circumstances, and the continual solicitation made him to put himself at the head of the patriots and the army. "It is too late," he constantly repeated; "the evil is now without remedy; it is no longer in my power to save the country. A civil war now would answer no end — would be of no utility. To myself alone it might prove advantageous, by affording me the means of procuring personally more favorable conditions; but these I must purchase by the inevitable destruction of the most generous and magnanimous spirit which France possesses; and such a result inspires me with horror." Up to the 29th of June, the day when the Emperor quitted Malmaison, no English vessel had been seen off the coast of Rochefort, and there in every reason to believe that Napoleon, if circumstances had allowed him to embark immediately after his abdication, would have reached the United States without obstruction. But when he arrived at the sea-coast he found every outlet occupied by the English, and appeared to retain little hope of escaping.

On the 1st of July he went on board the French frigate *La Surcouf*, which had been prepared to receive him. His suite was embarked on board the *Medusa*, and the next day, the 2nd, the two vessels anchored at the Isle of Aix. Napoleon, always the same, ordered the garrison underarms, examined the fortifications most minutely, and distributed praise or blame, as if he had still been sovereign master of the State. On the 10th the wind, hitherto contrary, became fair; but an English fleet of eleven vessels was cruising within sight of the port and it was impossible to get to sea. On the 11th the Emperor, weary of this state of anxiety, sent Comte des Las Cases, now become his secretary, to sound the disposition of the English Admiral, to inquire whether he was authorized to allow him liberty to repair to England or to the United States. The Admiral answered that he had no orders; nevertheless he was ready to receive Napoleon and convey him to England, but that it was not in his power to answer whether he would obtain permission to remain there or to repair to America. Napoleon, not satisfied with this answer, caused two half-decked vessels to be purchased, with intention, under favor of night, to reach a Danish smack with which he had contrived to hold communication.

This step having failed, some young midshipmen, full of courage and devotion, proposed to him to go on board the two barks, and swore they would forfeit their lives if they did not convey him to New York. Napoleon was not deterred by so long a voyage in such slight vessels, but he knew that they could not avoid stopping on the coasts of Spain and Portugal to take in water and provision, and he would not expose himself and people to the danger of falling into the hands of the Portuguese or Spaniards.

Being informed that an American vessel was at the mouth of the Gironde, he sent old General Lallemand immediately to ascertain the existence of the vessel, and the sentiments of the captain. The General returned with all speed to inform him that the captain would be happy and proud to extricate him from the persecution of his enemies; but Napoleon, yielding, as it is said, to the advice of some pontons about him, gave up the idea of attempting this passage, and determined to throw himself on the generosity of the English. On the 14th he caused the Admiral to be informed that the next day he would repair on board his vessel. On the 15th, in the morning, he went